

□ **Historical Commission Members 2011 - 2012**

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It is the mission and duty of the Norwood Historical Commission to “**promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of Norwood.**”□

Known as the “School on the Hill, famous for its majestic columns, clock tower and copper-domed cupola, Norwood Senior High School was designed by Norwood native William G. Upham in 1926. Unfortunately, this key landmark was demolished in August 2011. While numerous area school districts won state grants to renovate, to build new additions, and to help make their schools energy efficient through the Massachusetts School Building Authority’s Green Repair Program, instead Norwood chose to build a new “model” school. Norwood lost an opportunity to preserve for future generations, this particular work of William G. Upham; however, some of his other designs fortunately still live on.

In October 2011, Norwood resident and historian Heather Cole completed and presented a research paper entitled: ***Transforming Norwood: Architect William G. Upham’s Contribution to Early 20th Century Norwood, Massachusetts History***. Funding for this project was provided through

a Scholar-in-Residence grant from Mass Humanities, the state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Harvard-educated and Norwood native William G. Upham designed or renovated more than 50 public and private buildings throughout New England between 1911 and 1954, gaining recognition as a designer of Colonial, Georgian and Gothic Revival buildings. Upham's work in town was contemporary with that of Norwood's first town planner, George F. Willett, and landscape architect, Arthur A. Shurtleff, who was a protégé of Frederick Law Olmsted.

Besides Norwood Senior High School, other buildings designed by Upham here in Norwood include: Norwood Memorial Municipal Building, including the carillon tower, located at 566 Washington Street (on the National Register of Historic Places); Norwood Theatre at 109 Central Street (currently being restored); Norwood Masonic Temple at 76 Day Street; Norwood Odd Fellows Hall at 661 Washington Street; Norwood Post Office at One Central Street; Norwood Pumping Station on Route 1; the Nahatan Street Bridge (rededicated in 2009 in honor of Norwood World War II veteran Col. George T. Lee); Norwood Junior High School now the Guild Medical Center at 825 Washington Street; and Guild Theatre now Conrad's Restaurant at 728 Washington Street.

At present, the Norwood Historical Commission is building the replica of the oldest school in Norwood (c. 1788) at the George H. Morse Meeting House, Museum and Education Center at 1285 Washington Street in South Norwood. This one room school, called the Little Red Brick School, should be completed in 2012 and open to Norwood school children.

Following the completion of the Little Red Brick School, this Commission plans to look into the restoration of St. Gabriel's Chapel at Highland Cemetery and the renovation of the Norwood Pumping Station.

The Norwood Historical Commission supports the research currently underway by the Local Historic District Study Committee to establish an historic district around Town Common and actively supports the ongoing restoration of historic Norwood Theatre being done by Dover resident

Susan Lewis.